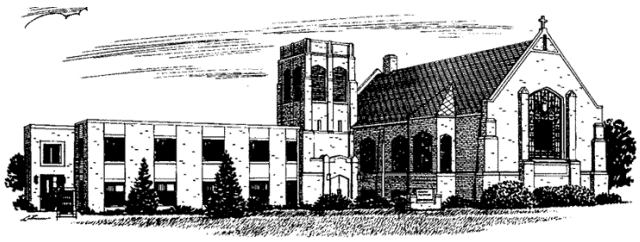


SARON NEWSLETTER

Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA)
510 Main Street
St. Joseph, Michigan 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email: info@saronlutheran.org
Phone: 269-983-1273
Facebook: www.facebook.com/saronlutheranchurchst.joseph

The Rev. Joan Oleson, Pastor
Home: 269-983-2475
Email: oleson@saronlutheran.org

Marcus Roll, Senior Choir Director,
Bell Choir Director
Email: roll1mc@gmail.com
Irma Gorman, Organist
Margaret Froehlich, Administrative
Assistant
Megan Savage Financial Secretary
Email: financial@saronlutheran.org
Emily Gaul, Child Care

Sundays at Saron:
During the School Year:
8:30 & 11:00 A.M. Worship
Childcare provided
9:40 Learning for Ages 2 – Adult

Summers (thru Labor Day weekend):
9:30 Holy Communion
Childcare provided
No Learning Hour

All are welcome!

We hold in prayer:
The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton,
Presiding Bishop, ELCA
The Rev. Dr. Craig Satterlee, Bishop of the
North/West Lower Michigan Synod, ELCA
The Rev. Whayne Hougland, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Western MI

Our Companion Synods:
Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras
Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea
Lutheran Church of Latvia

Saron's Mission:
Joyfully sharing God's love for all!!

January 2020

I am not one who likes New Year's resolutions. I have rarely made them, probably because I usually fail at them and then feel bad. (And, who wants to feel bad?) Yet, in recent years I have come to appreciate the vision boards that our family does at the end of the year. (Perhaps there is no real difference but I put them in a different category.) Sitting around the dining room table, we (the girls and their families and I) cut out words or pictures from magazines and paste them on pieces of 11x14 poster board. There is conversation, laughter, and sharing of what our vision for the next year (or so) will include. Sometimes it's a trip or life event or getting a pet.

I wonder about the vision we, the people of Saron, have for 2020 – the vision we hold for ourselves or for the community at large? How does our vision align with God's? As we begin year 2 of Project Fortify and Fly we move forward with repairs and strengthening our ministry, working to be faithful to God's vision for us in this time and place.

As you discern your own role in your faith life and work, consider joining a Bible study or the choir, helping Golden Hammers with the care of the building and grounds, or simply "being" with someone who needs a listening ear. There may be laughter, tears, and good conversation along the way. All as we "joyfully share God's love for all!!!"

Pastor Joan

Caring and Sharing

In Our Prayers –

We remember in our thoughts and prayers:
Arla Huelsberg is at the Whitcomb Tower Retirement Center, St. Joseph; **Bernice Koski** is at Woodland Terrace; **Virginia Anserello** is at Pine Ridge, Stevensville.

Office Hours at Saron
Margaret (secretary): Mon-Tues, 9 AM - 1 PM
Weds of Newsletter Week, 9 AM - 1 PM
Volunteers: Weds, 9:30 AM - 11 AM+
Financial Secretary: Megan Savage
Call the office for more information.
When Pastor is out of town, emergency pastoral care information can be obtained by calling the church office (983.1273) or contacting the president of the congregation.
Note: E-mails meant for Pastor should be addressed to oleson@saronlutheran.org. E-mails to Margaret and the church office should be addressed to info@saronlutheran.org.

Happy Birthday Wishes to Saron's Members in January 2020.

Jan. 2 - Betty Ross
Sophie de la Foret
3 – Richard Schalon
Kealana Gulley
4 - Zachery Booth
Kathleen Preston
9 - Anthony Kickles, Jr.
13 - Nicholas Jantz
14 - T. J. Koehler
15 - Meredith Hammer
Pat Breyen
Walter Schmuhl
Colin Ashley
16 - Jonah Rood
18 - Hayley Frey
19 – Karen Hinckley
23 - Donald Hafer
24 - Lyra Krall
25 – Karen Johnson
28 – John Taylor

Happy Anniversary Wishes to the following Members in January 2020.

Jan. 1 - Charles and Linda Pater
2 – Jim and Jennifer Nicholas
19 – Steve and Denise Cook

For additions or corrections, please call the church office at 983-1273. Thank you.

Annual Meeting

Saron's Annual meeting will be held on Sunday, January 26th, 2020. A potluck will follow the 11:00 worship and the meeting is scheduled for 1:00 pm. All voting members of Saron are encouraged to attend, as we adopt a spending plan for 2021, receive reports, and hold elections.

PRAYER GROUP

Join us on Mondays at 11:00 a.m. for a time of quiet reflection and prayer, which includes lifting up the requests offered on Sundays at worship. We meet in the sanctuary.

The days have grown shorter and colder. The sounds of contractors working in and around the building have been replaced with the sounds of voices in meetings (and kids practicing for the Christmas Program). As is often the case at the end of a year, implementation on many projects has been wrapped up and we have since put renewed focus on looking ahead and planning for the projects that will take center stage in the new year. We look forward to discussing this further when we gather together for the 2020 Saron Annual Meeting on January 26th.

As of the end of November, we had collected $193,034 towards our 3 year pledge total of $371,165. You may continue to give towards your 2019 pledge right up until December 31st. For those intending to give towards their 2020 Fortify & Fly pledge in 2019 for tax purposes, you may do so by simply turning in a 2019 dated check before December 31st with "2020 F&F" on the memo line. Have a blessed Christmas!

THANK YOU NOTE

I would like to thank all who made my birthday special! those who sent cards, brought me food, and a plant.
I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year.
God's Blessing,
Ruth Ball

Worship

FACEBOOK

We love to share pictures of Saron's ministry on our Facebook page and we get great feedback. It is our practice not to put names with the pictures. If you have questions, or prefer your picture not to appear, please contact Pastor.

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS

As you prepare for worship, you are invited to read and reflect on the Scriptures for the day.

Sunday, Jan. 5 –
Second Sunday of Christmas
Jeremiah 31:7-14
Psalm 147:12-20
Ephesians 1:3-14
John 1:1-18

Sunday, Jan. 12 –
Baptism of Our Lord
Isaiah 42:1-9
Psalm 29
Acts 10:34-43
Matthew 3:13-17

Sunday, Jan. 19 –
Second Sunday of Epiphany
Isaiah 49:1-7
Psalm 40:1-11
1 Corinthians 1:1-9
John 1:29-42

Sunday, Jan. 26 –
Third Sunday of Epiphany
Isaiah 9:1-4
Psalm 27:1, 4-9
1 Corinthians 1:10-18
Matthew 4:12-23

Nursery News

Getting to know our little ones can be a fun experience. We work with a variety of schedules to make sure we have a second person in the room with our paid child care provider. We have a great group of women that rotate in this role so that it is an every other month duty for the late service. We would like to get the early service to have the same rotation but we need a few more people to make that happen. We will gladly welcome more volunteers for the late service also.

Please let Marilyn Lucy, Krin Jurgensen, or Pastor Oleson know you are interested.

2020 FLOWER CALENDAR

The 2020 flower calendar is posted. Cost: $25.00/vase. This is an opportunity for you to give flowers in honor or memory of someone. The church orders the flowers (unless you indicate otherwise) and you can take the flowers home after 2nd service.

2020 OFFERING ENVELOPES

You may pick up your 2020 offering envelopes. They may be found near the church entrance doors. If you receive a giving statement (whether you give through the envelope system or electronically) there is likely a box for you.

PARKING

During the cold and wintry months, please consider leaving the parking spaces closest to Saron for those who find it most difficult to navigate the snow and ice. This, even as we try to have our walks and parking spaces clear! Thanks!

Youth

Are you in grades 6-12? Please join us for youth group activities! The next gathering is on December 15, after the second service. For more info, contact Scott at *scottgaspari@outlook.com or (Cell) 847-373-8825.*

Learning

Saron is a congregation seeking to become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered and sent by the Word.

SUNDAY LEARNING HOUR NEWS

There are learning groups for ages 3-adult on Sundays at 9:40. This includes younger youth, confirmation aged youth (gr. 6-8), high school youth, and adults. The adult forum continues their series on St. Augustine's Confessions, a series from Great Courses. Newcomers are always welcome.

Men's monthly Bible Devotions and Breakfast

On Saturday, January 4th, Saron Men's Monthly Devotion and Breakfast group will meet at the Galley Grill on Red Arrow Highway in Stevensville at 9:00 am. The Galley Grill is on the Super 8 Motel property at 4296 Red Arrow Highway just north of the Tyler Honda car dealership. We welcome new participants

Tuesday Evening Men's Bible Study

Tuesday Evening Bible Study will resume on January 7, 2018 when we will start studying the book of Revelation.

Saron's Tuesday Evening Men's Bible Study meets at 6:00pm at the church. At 7:00pm we adjourn for a time of fellowship. We know everyone is busy so Bible study is a "come as you can" group. All men are invited to join in. For more information call or text Bob Kynast at 269-921-2786 or Don Hafer at 269-985-3637

"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another" (Proverbs 27:17).

THURSDAY MORNING STUDY

A new study begins Thursday, January 9. Entitled "Entering the Passion *of* Jesus," this 6-week study takes us on a step-by-step journey through the last day of Jesus. And, it will help us look at the passion of Jesus through Jewish eyes.

Themes included are:
Jerusalem: Risking Reputation – January 9:
The Temple: Risking Righteous Anger – January 16;
Teachings: risking Challenge – January 23;
The First Dinner: Risking Rejection – January 30;
The Last Supper: Risking the Loss of Friends – February 6; and Gethsemane: Risking Temptation – February 13.

The learner guide for this 6-week study is $9.00. They will be available in the narthex. The group meets on Thursdays from 9:30-11:00. Join us for good discussion, friendship, and learning.

EPHESUS STUDY GROUP

The Ephesus group will meet at 5:30 pm on Sunday, January 19 at the home of Linda and Charlie Pater. Bob and Deanna Deaton will lead the study. This group typically meets on the third Sunday of the month. Bible study happens first, then the group shares a simple meal together. Anyone is welcome to try this group to see if it's for you! Contact Bob or Mary Kynast for details (269-921-2786 or 269-921-3816).

1ST SUNDAY BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

We won't meet in January. That gives you time to get a head start on our selection for February which is "Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI", by David Grann. Amazon's description says it best. "A twisting, haunting true-life murder mystery about one of the most monstrous crimes in American history". It is a searing indictment of the callousness and prejudice toward American Indians. Join the discussion on February 9th (the second Sunday) 6:30 in the upstairs lounge to find out what we didn't learn in American History class.
If you love to read, love to talk about what you have read, we would love to have you join us. All are welcome. Questions? Contact Kathy Cowall (269-428-0354) or kcowall@hotmail.com. "Only a generation of readers will spawn a generation of writers." (Steven Spielberg)

Women of the ELCA.

DEBORAH CIRCLE

Deborah Circle Christmas Party will be held at the home of Linda Pater on January 8th 2020, at 6:00 p.m. A carpool will leave the church at 5:30 p.m. for those who wish to join it. Everyone should bring a dish to share (not dessert) and also a monetary gift for the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen.

BAKE SALE

Saron Church Women thanks everyone who participated in the bake sale on December 8, 2019. Proceeds from that day came to $820.00. Thanks, also, for the continued donations on December 15, totaling an additional $199.00. The grand total of $1,019.00 will all go to the Saron Mentor Fund. Thanks, again for all of your support.

On Sunday, January 12, 2020 Saron Church Women Officers and Leaders will be installed. They are:
President: Melanie McCammon
Vice President: Linda Pater
Secretary: Elizabeth Kunkel
Treasurer: Denise Cook
Mission: Action Chair: Colleen Lundgren
CWU Representative: Irma Gorman
Deborah Circle Chair: Melanie McCammon
Dorcas Circle Chair: Irma Gorman

Hospitality

Sign Up for Refreshments

Please consider signing up for refreshments to be served after worship on Sundays. There is a sign-up sheet on the Narthex bulletin board.

Support

A Special Message for Travelers and Those Who Prefer Electronic Giving

Saron offers the option to give electronically for your convenience. Please contact the church office if you have any questions or to enroll. Thanks.

Saron Endowment Fund Update

Marilyn Frey (Chairperson of the Saron Endowment Committee) gives Brenda Yenchus (President of Exchange Club of Southwest Michigan) Saron's donation of $2,000 for the Good Fellows Fund.

The Good Fellows Fund, established in 1920, benefits the less fortunate during the holiday season. Families and older adults who are in need are identified by the Department of Human Services. The Good Fellows Fund provides those individuals and families with assistance with values from $100 to $450 depending on the size of the family. Those who have received support have used the money for everything from Christmas presents for their children to filling prescriptions they haven't been able to afford. All of the money donated stays in Berrien County, and every penny goes to someone who needs a boost, as The Herald-Palladium takes care of all overhead expenses. This year (2019) the goal is to raise $35,000 and the support will be provided in the form of Meijer Gift Cards.

STOCK DONATIONS

Saron partners with TD Ameritrade, a brokerage firm, to accept stock donations. If you would like to donate stock, e-mail Matt Bradley to receive the account number for which the shares will be transferred to. Once the transaction has been completed, e-mail Matt Bradley the name of the stock, the number of shares, and the date of the transfer. This allows the transaction to be completed and ensures it is included on your giving statement. Thanks! Matt Bradley, treasurer

Facilities

WILL YOU VACUUM?

Our cleaning service attends to Saron's needs every other week. On the off-week, especially during the winter months, a vacuum of the sanctuary, narthex, and entry way is needed. Are you available and willing to do this? A sign-up sheet is available. Preferred vacuum times are between 8 pm on Thursday and Saturday evening. Thank you!

Outreach

November's Mission Moment - HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Last month the Outreach Committee and the Refugee Crisis study group asked everyone to write cards with messages of hope and encouragement to refugees and immigrants living in detention centers. And when we reached our deadline on December 1, we had **95 cards** on hand, ready to be mailed to the designated partner Lutheran Church in Baltimore, Maryland. From there, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services personnel sent the cards to one of three detention centers -- one in Maryland and two in Texas. By now, our messages and greetings are on their way to those who are waiting and hoping for a better life in our country.

Thanks to all of you who took time to write these messages! We hope everyone will continue to keep these people in your hearts and prayers.

INCLUSIVITY TASK FORCE

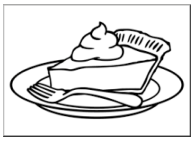
A task force at Saron has been looking at issues of welcome and inclusivity and how to best live into our mission of "joyfully sharing God's love for all!!!"

As noted, the task force is working toward the possibility of Saron becoming a Reconciling In Christ congregation, that is a congregation intentional in its welcome of those in the LGBTQIA+ community. During the months ahead we will be offering opportunities and resources that will help open our hearts and minds to what that means. This month's clunky question is: *"Who is the man in the relationship?"* You can see the video clip that addresses that question at https://youtu.be/Pd4qj1eTQ58. It is approximately 3 minutes in length.

We also have available at Saron's kiosk a resource entitled "Asexuality: an Introduction to the Asexual and Aromantic Spectrums." Asexual is a sexual orientation characterized by a lack of sexual attraction toward any gender. This resource explains both the asexual and aromantic spectrums

Serving on the task force are Kati and Nick Hooper, Laurel Gacek, Laura Hicks, Darlene Kiessel and Pastor. Contact any of these folks if you would like to know more or be part of the conversation.

BENTON HARBOR SOUP KITCHEN



Thank you to all who helped prepare & provide pies for the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen on Thanksgiving Day. Keith Steven, who purchased the pies in memory of his wife Jan, a long time chair of Outreach at Saron. Also Ruth Ball, Darlene Kiessel, and Liz Kunkel for baking pies and Deb Standen for her help, including pie delivery on Thanksgiving morning.

Thank you for supporting Saron in this outreach opportunity as a part of the ELCA's mission of *God's Gifts, Our Hands!*

Large cans of fruit are always needed at the Soup Kitchen & can be dropped off anytime at the church. Any questions or to volunteer or provide cookies please contact Kathie Bradley at 269- 921-4665.

GLORIA

SARON LUTHERAN CHURCH
510 MAIN STREET
ST. JOSEPH, MI 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email:info@saronlutheran.org

A Congregation of:
The North/West Lower Michigan Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

January 2020

We're on Facebook! Like us at
www.facebook.com/saronlutheranchurchst.joseph

Saron 2020
January Volunteer Schedule

	January 5 Epiphany of our Lord		**January 12 Baptism of Our Lord**		**January 19 Second Sunday after Epiphany**		**January 26 Third Sunday after Epiphany**	
	8:30	**11:00**	**8:30**	**11:00**	**8:30**	**11:00**	**8:30**	**11:00**
Assisting minister	Wendy King	Bob Deaton	Eric Standen	Bill Oleson	Marilyn Frey	Connie Slater	Sue Rood	Scott Kohs
Reader/ Com.Asst	Karen Hinckley	Scott Gaspari	Steve Bell	Don Hafer	Sally Schmuhl	Dan Fortenbacher	Jim Manore	Laurel Gacek
Ushers	Keith Stevens & Steve Bell	Dave and Kathie Bradley	Walt Schmuhl & Jim Manore	Jerry and Ruth Stelling	Fran Richards & Elizabeth Kunkel	Scott and Lindsay Gaspari	Dave & Sue Bailey	Peter & Karen Johnson
Acolyte	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Nursery 1st	Mary Alice Brunner	Karen Hinckley	Deb Standen	Meredith Gacek	Jenna Henderson	Laura Stark	Marilyn Lucy	Lindsay Gaspari
Nursery 2nd	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul
Bldg. close		Bob and Mary Kynast		Dave and Kathie Bradley		Dennis and Colleen Lundgren		Bob Hopkins
Snacks	Irma Gorman							
Flowers					Karen Hinckley Birthday today			

JANUARY 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31	**1** 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers	**2** 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	**3**	4 9:00 a.m. Men's Devotion/Break fast at the Galley Grill
5 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. Worship & 9:40 a.m. Learning	**6** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group	**7** 6:00 p. m. Men's Bible Study	**8** 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers	**9** 9:30 a.m. Bible Study 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	**10**	11
12 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. Worship & 9:40 a.m. Learning W/ELCA Installation	**13** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group 6:00 p.m. Support Committee Meeting	**14** 6:00 p. m. Men's Bible Study	**15** 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers	**16** 9:30 a.m. Bible Study 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	**17**	18
19 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. Worship & 9:40 a.m. Learning	**20** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group 7:00 p.m. Church Council	**21** 6:00 p. m. Men's Bible Study	**22** 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers	**23** 9:30 a.m. Bible Study 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	**24**	25
26 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. Worship & 9:40am Learning 12:00 p.m. Potluck 1:00 p.m. Annual Meeting	**27** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group	**28** 6:00 p. m. Men's Bible Study	**29** 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers	**30** 9:30 a.m. Bible Study 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	**31**	1